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Hensley, J. L.

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RISE AND PROGRESS
OF THE CHURCH OF THE
UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST
IN WEST VIRGINIA

The Reverend J. L. Hensley, M.D.

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RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH OF THE
UNITED BRETHREN IN CHRIST IN WEST VIRGINIA

Rev. J. L. Hensley

The history, the rise and progress of a Church is like that of a nation or province. It is necessarily vague and unsatisfactory in its nature for want of data from which to compile facts in the absence of records. And a sketch of this kind has to be abridged to such an extent to bring it in the bounds of the allotted time, that many important facts have to be omitted. By the blessing of the Divine Father, we as a Church have passed our infancy, childhood and youth, and today are permitted to place our hands upon the fiftieth milestone in the road of progress. It is therefore meet and proper that we assemble here in the Leafy Grove, and for a few days after this manner celebrate this eventful occasion, the fiftieth Anniversary of the advent of the United Brethren Church into this part of God's moral heritage.

In order that we may be more fully acquainted with the circumstances of the occasion which we now celebrate, your pastor, Rev. E. F. Chapman, requested me to prepare a paper on the subject constituting the caption of this paper. With the limited opportunities I have had and the very few records I have had access to, I present the following imperfect sketch:

In the year 1836 Rev. Moses Michael of the Virginia Annual Conference made his debut in Mason County, as the first minister of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, west of the Alleghenies. Among the first preaching places sought and obtained was one in a log house on the waters of Broad Run, but a short distance from here, where under the labors of this first pioneer, the first members, 20 in number, joined the Church, the following names being enrolled:

Henry Nease
 Elizabeth Nease
 John Hoffman, Sr.
 John Hoffman, Jr.
 Christina Hoffman
 Thomas Oliver
 Savina Oliver
 Mark Roush
 Mary Roush
 Peggy Morgan

Katherine Gibbs
 Susan Rickard
 Mary Nease
 Katie Hoffman
 Phoebe Hoffman
 Susan Riffle
 Barbara Yaeger (colored)
 Winnie Seigrist
 Hoffman
 Barbara Rickard

and organized into a class, known as the Henry Nease Class.

Father Nease, who was the first class-leader is well remembered by the people of this community having lived near here. His house was for many years the home of the itinerant ministers, as you have heard him testify. He continued to serve his God both day and night.

Reverend Michael will be remembered by many, not only as the first pioneer, but as one of the men through whose energy the town of West Columbia was founded and built up, he having gone for a time to the Great Kanawha Valley, and engaged in the salt business, where he accumulated some means which he invested in real estate at West Columbia, where he to a great extent was instrumental in building up to the U. B. Church a name that has become historic. He aided largely in the erection of the old brick church, which he conveyed by deed to the Society at that place which deed was neglected and never recorded, but was duplicated by him in later years and recorded properly. The present new church bears an emblem of his name and labors, as the brick from which the walls were built being taken from the old building; as were also the pews now used therein. He died a few years since somewhere in the West, I believe in the state of Missouri. To the memory of this good man this meeting points as faithfully as the magnetized needle points to its wonderful attraction in the hidden chambers of the North. It is to be regretted that his portrait could not be obtained to grace our cabinet here today. But the

vows taken by these old Brothers and Sisters when his hand pressed theirs, in giving them the right hand of Church fellowship, has more indelibly photographed him upon their hearts than the camera could have impressed his portrait upon a sensitized plate. And the work he did in this country has developed that picture better than the finest chemicals and the most skillful artist could have done. Then Fathers and Mothers be faithful to the end of life and you will have the pleasure of meeting him in that happy reunion in the golden city where anniversaries are never held but where a thousand years is as but a day and it is one eternal morn. Peace be to his ashes. As last accounts, his widow, who shared largely his toils for the Master, was still living at their western home.

Mr. Michael was succeeded by Rev. Harry Jones of the Virginia Conference, who served the Charge up to 1840, and completed the organization in this neighborhood and established some other appointments. About this time, owing to the extreme isolation of this work, from the body of the Virginia Conference, Mr. Jones thought it politic to obtain a supply for the work from the Scioto Conference of Ohio, and with this in view, attended the session at that Conference and placed the work under its official care, and Rev. B. Cohler was appointed to the work. About 1841 George M. Livingston, an earnest and active itinerant, was sent to the work and during the year held some good revival meetings, notable among which was a Woods meeting held in the Grove near Mr. Leitwiller's house on the farm now owned by D. S. Elliott, near the town of New Haven, W. Va. At this meeting a number of persons were converted and united with the Church, among whom was our venerable Father and Mother Lewis and Mary Bumgarner who at once grasped the tiller wheel of the old ship and have never relinquished their hold nor forsaken their post through all these years. Through forty-four years this old ship has been tempest tossed, and many an adverse wind has been encountered, and though

natural sight has been impaired and their limbs have grown feeble and their steps faltering yet all are glad to know that the eye of faith grows brighter and the arms stronger as the feet shod with the gospel of peace are still speeding their way on to meet the loved ones gone before, and to greet those old companions here who with them have born the burden and heat of the day.

The following year Rev. Appleman was appointed to the charge and labored that year and was succeeded about the year 1844 or 45 by Rev. Jonas Fronfelter, whose name has long been a household word among our people full of energy and Christian zeal. Nothing retarded him in his labors through storm and sunshine; even swimming the Ohio River upon his horse, we are told, to reach his appointments and break the Bread of Life to his people. On reading this paragraph Brother Fronfelter arose and sang the same song he sung while swimming his horse over the Ohio River at Syracuse, Ohio, with wonderful effect. We are glad to know that God still has spared this his faithful servant to work for the Master (and permitted him to join us in this praise service to God for his mercies toward us). It would be a great thing for some of our young men who so much fear the early dews lest they impair their health to be here and view the strong lines that yet mark his venerable countenance as he yet makes his tours as a faithful itinerant, although a half century of earnest work has been given to God. May God yet spare our aged Brother to do much for the Master and may he fall at his post with the Gospel harness on.

This Brother was followed by Rev. G. B. Rimal, T. E. Ambrose as a supply, and he by Rev. G. M. Livingston, who was returned to the charge and served one year. About this time Rev. Moses Michael made arrangements with the Virginia Conference and the work was supplied by Rev. Pope. About the year 18 ?, the Rev. J. Markwood, Presiding Elder, Virginia Conference, took official charge of

the work in this part of the State and Rev. G. M. Statton was placed in charge of the work and labored very acceptably among the people here, and who is still living and in the active work in the State of Iowa. His photo may be seen in the cabinet on exhibition here and his name may be seen affixed to the first Quarterly Conference License held by your humble writer of this sketch, bearing date October 18, 1856, nearly 30 years ago.

We have but little account of the work at this time farther than that it was called Guyandotte Circuit, and was about 400 miles around and paid about \$100 salary. From this time until the organization of the Parkersburg Conference, in March 1858, the work was regularly supplied by the Virginia Conference, being traveled by John Harvey, still living, W. T. Lawer, J. W. Perry, J. K. Statton, W. McCain, Z. Warner, B. Stickler, Presiding Elder, and others, all of whom are remembered by many of us, and are still in the active work in one place or another, except Brothers Cain and Lawer and Stickley, who have passed over the river and rest from their labors.

The rapid spread of the Church, west of the mountains, together with the great distance and almost impassable range of mountains, between the main body of the Conference and the western portion, and the combination of other circumstances, made it necessary to organize this section into a separate Conference, which was done in the year 1858, which fact will lead me to leave the local interest we now celebrate and deal in a more general manner of the progress of the church in West Virginia. But before leaving the local interest, here allow me to say that the Church along the Ohio River had awakened to a high grade of interest in the Master's cause, so much as to open a school at West Columbia, and establish a paper known as The Virginia Telescope, but both these interests being wholly of a local nature, were abandoned and the zeal running so high, lead the brethren to

make the mistake at Hartford that has often been made of undertaking to build a house beyond their means, and ingloriously failed and left a monument stand to this day that has worked a detriment to our success.

In March 1858 the new Conference was organized at Centerville, Tyler County, West Virginia, with 11 members, 10 of whom were present as follows: J. Bachtel, G. W. Miles, J. W. Perry, L. Hess, Z. Warner, Samuel Martin, Eli Martin, William James, J. D. White, H. R. Davis, Absent, D. Engle; 8 fields of labor were arranged for on which were reported 950 members, with receipts of membership the first year of 484 and an average salary of \$114.02. Rev. B. Stickley had served the District as Presiding Elder this year, having been filled by appointments from the Virginia Conference. Father Stickley traveled to the District from his home in Hampshire County, traveling over the huge range of mountains and attending the various isolated fields spread out from Guyandotte to Beverly, all of which had to be done on horseback and reported a salary of \$155.60.

The young maiden Conference set out now on its first year with J. W. Perry on the West District, as it was then called, embracing West Columbia Circuit, Ripley Mission, Jackson Circuit, Elk Mission and Kanawha Mission.

J. W. Miles was assigned to East District, which embraced Taylor Circuit, West Union Mission, Lewis Circuit, Middle Island Circuit, Parkersburg Mission and Glenville Circuit with bouyant hopes. The ministers went out to the work and toiled and prayed for success, with which their labors were in a measure crowned during that and after years. The second session of the Conference and the one in which he first reported was held at Ripley in Jackson County, West Virginia, in March 1859, at which no material changes were made. At this session your humble servant received his first appointment to a field of labor in this Conference, being assigned to Lewis Circuit, which then embraced portions of Lewis, Upshur,

Harrison, and Barbour Counties, with an area of 227 miles traveled with 16 appointments. The following two years was spent on Taylor Circuit, afterwards Phillipi Circuit with 27 appointments and a salary of \$97.60. And subsequently he traveled other works, making in all 14 years on 7 different fields, for which he received \$1585.25, or an average of \$108.09 per year

The third session was held at Glenville, Gilmer County, West Virginia, March 8, 1860, at which there was present 16 members of the Conference. At this session the membership reached 2104, an increase during the past year of 290 over all loses, with a salary of \$1085.27 paid to traveling preachers, and \$109.59 paid to the Presiding Elders. The Conference reported \$80.82 Missionary money collected and 21 Sunday Schools with 875 children in Sunday School and \$58.25 collected for Sunday School purposes. The Conference received from parent board this year the sum of \$98.00 Missionary money as a Mission Conference. Undaunted by the meager salary, an average of \$88.40 to the preacher, they went boldly out, and though formidable opposition came from sources from which we should have expected better things. Some parties through selfish purposes using our position of opposition to human bondage as a lever to incite the basest passions of the populace against us, even to misrepresentation of the gravest character. The Country then being in a feverish condition over the vexed question of slavery and having reached a white heat and had a new impetus from the exciting scenes of the John Brown Raid made this year eventful in the history of this Conference. The Religious Telescope was in many places committed to the flames by drunken justices who pronounced it an incendiary sheet unfit to be read in the State. During this and the following year the Telescope of the writer was regularly burned but through the clemency of the Post Master at Peel Tree in Barbour County he was permitted to clandestinely pass into the Post Office through a back

door and read the Telescope on the terms that he keep it a profound secret from the public, and especially from Esquire Pickens, who had charge of Virginia's Match Box. Yet through all this and every conceivable form of opposition from the world, the devil and some professedly Christian Churches, the Church grew and prospered and was introduced into many new sections of the State. The entire District being served by Rev. J. W. Perry, as Presiding Elder, who traveled a great portion of work on foot, and the remainder on horseback on a salary of something near \$150. Many of the early ministers will remember the kindness of Uncle John, as he was familiarly known, and many of our lay brethren will remember having been aroused from a midnight nap by the arrival of Brother Perry after his having traversed the hills and valleys for many miles after all nature was wrapped in its nocturnal robes. We are happy to know the Good Lord has still spared the life of Brother Perry and permitted him to live (and meet with us on this occasion) to work for the Master and see the fruits of his toils. May God still preserve his life and give him many more souls as seals to his ministry.

At the close of this Conference year the Conference met in its 4th Annual session at Union Church in Mason County, Virginia, March 15, 1861. Our venerable Bishop Glossbrenner who presided at all these sessions up to this date was permitted to be with us here. Eleven members of the conference were present and eight absent. Notwithstanding all the unfavorable circumstances through which we had to pass there was reported to the chart 2210 members an increase of 287 over all losses, preachers salary \$1228.17, an increase of nearly \$200 and there was collected for Missions \$56.34, and in spite of the flames 26 Telescopes were reported in the hands of the Conference. The conference district was divided into three districts and L. Hess, Z. Warner and J. W. Miles elected Presiding Elders. L. Hess failed to take the district assigned him and the work was preformed by Z. Warner and

J. W. Miles, the latter being then perhaps the oldest minister in the Conference, or at least the oldest in the active ministry. He served faithfully during this year, but afterwards served as pastor a few years and became Local after traveling 27 years and 12 different fields of labor, and today maintains a large degree of activity, though bordering hard onto his three score and ten years. He now resides on his farm in Gilmore County, West Virginia. At this session Rev. S. J. Graham was licensed and received into the Conference and Itinerancy and placed in charge of Pennsboro Circuit, having traveled under the direction of a Presiding Elder, the previous year; having been licensed at a Quarterly Conference on Lewis Circuit, in October 1859, G. W. Miles, Presiding Elder, and G. L. Hensley, P. C. he being among the first preachers after the session at which the Conference was organized. Though a beardless youth he early manifested that fearless and determined spirit in the advocacy of the principles of the Church and that firmness and determination to hold up those principles unsullied to the world, that has always characterized him in his after life and work. A fair preacher and a devoted friend, he has filled almost every station in the gift of the Conference, having traveled almost a quarter of a century without the loss of a month from the itinerant ranks. He is at this time Presiding Elder on the Buckhannon District. From this session the preachers went out with throbbing hearts. The signs of the times were portentous, the dark red cloud of war and blood was already lowering in the sky. The ordinance of secession was being discussed in the convention at Richmond and the eastern circuits were under Palmeto flag and on our return to the town of Philippi two hostile flags floated over the town from which my circuit took its name, and from that hour it was one scene of carnage and bloodshed. Some of our preachers were made prisoners of war by the hostile enemies of our country's flag, while others had to flee from their fields and in some instances whole

circuits were annihilated by the influences of the war. It was a life and death struggle for existence during the whole year.

In March 1862 the Conference met at Centerville, Tyler County. With fear and trembling 7 ministers convened and held the session. Our beloved Bishop Glossbrenner being within the Confederate lines in Virginia was unable to meet with us and preside over the session, so J. W. Perry was elected Bishop protem, and G. L. Hensley, Secretary, and Z. Warner and four others--William James, S. G. Graham, W. A. Long, and J. W. Miles constituted the Conference. The sad fact was revealed to us that our membership had been reduced from 2210 to 1531 and the salary of the whole Conference only footed up \$594.40, an average of \$59.44 to the preacher, and this at a time when the price of living was trebled what it now is. As an example we might quote the markets: flour from \$12.00 to \$16.00 per barrel, corn \$1.50 per bushel, bacon 22 cents per pound, coffee 50 to 60 cents, sugar 22 to 25 cents, calico cents per yard, and common muslin 50 to 60 cents per yard, hay \$30 to \$35 per ton, and that indispensable article of a preacher's supply, chickens, 50 cents apiece, and an ordinary suit of clothes, such as can be bought now for \$12 to \$15, but then from \$40 to \$60, and a respectable overcoat from \$30 to \$45. Hence, nearly all our preachers came up to Conference in soldiers' overcoats or blankets to keep out the chilly blasts, yet in that little Spartan band might be seen a devotion equal to the emergency.

J. W. Perry and Z. Warner were elected Presiding Elders. J. W. Perry was assigned to the West Columbia District and Z. Warner to the Parkersburg District. To the energy and tact of Z. Warner as much or more than any other living man is due success of this Conference. He was one of the movers in the organization of the Conference and at once became the recognized leader and was a leader in the highest sense of the term. In this he differed from many leaders or would be

leaders. He never endeavored to drive as some men do nor to manifest the least spirit of mastery over his brethren in the ministry or laity but always with a humble spirit of Christian courtesy and magnetism seldom found in any man, he drew the brethren and indeed the people generally around him as readily as the magnet attracts the metallic objects to it. Generous to a fault and faithful to a friend he made to himself an influence that lead the Conference to cling to him as a colony of bees cling to their queen. His well-balanced mind and his unusual memory led him not only to lay in for himself a store of knowledge, equal to a Roman Knight, but his genial spirit and devotion to the success of his brethren made him not only a leader but a teacher through whose counsel and tutorship many worthy men stepping out from the common walks of life, comparatively unlettered were kept in the work often on large and hard fields and grew up to a degree of literary training and theological qualifications that enabled them to compete with the ministers of other churches and scholars of the State and those who have transferred to other conferences have been recognized as able and first class preachers and nearly all of them placed in important positions in the Conference to which they have gone. With all his ability Brother Warner labored on in this Conference often on less than \$100 a year. Some eight years ago Otterbein University conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity which honors seem to make him more humble rather than to elevate him over his brethren. For a number of years he was the tutor in the theological institute of the Conference, taking this additional labor without any additional compensation above the actual expense of traveling to and from the meeting of the institutes. In the last year of his labors in this Conference he served as Presiding Elder on the largest District in the Conference and traveled as a Temperance Lecturer filling his appointments as a Presiding Elder, but lectured in every county in the State, on Temperance

and sowed seed that will tell in after years in the redemption of our state from the thralldoom of the rum power. In May 1885 he was elected to the General Conference, held at Fostoria, Ohio, as corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society, a place he is well qualified to fill, to which he carried his indomitable energy and perseverance, together with his fine preaching ability, which gives him success wherever he goes and is rapidly infusing new life into the mission work of the Church. As a preacher he is clear and logical. Indeed it was admitted that he had few equals and no superiors in the State.

One of his co-workers and one in whom the entire Conference and Church placed the utmost confidence was that old tried and true itinerant Rev. Jacob Bachtel, of sacred memory, who for many years had labored in the Virginia Conference, but who cast his lot in with his brethren in this Conference and labored most abundantly during the upbuilding of the Conference. I need but speak his name here to awaken memories of the past and set in motion the hidden affection that is concealed in the heart of every one who knew him, for his name is written in every United Brethren home in West Columbia District. He served the church in all its places of trust, always at his post and doing his work well, frequently traveling on foot from his home beyond Ripley to this place to fill his appointments. No toil nor sacrifice was too great for him. The fact that the Church seemed to have a backset at this period of its history bore heavily upon him and worry and anxiety of the war set so hard upon him that he seemed to fail rapidly and October 23, 1866, he died in the full triumph of the faith of the Gospel and his mortal remains sleeps in the churchyard, at Otterbein in Jackson County, W. Va.

At this session of the Conference brother Bachtel took charge of the Jackson Circuit and afterwards in 1865 he was appointed to the West Columbia Circuit, which he served until his death, at the above date. From this session the preachers went

out to encounter but a repetition of the conflicts of the past year, our Conference territory being the field of the national carnage. Thanks be to God, through it all we held our own and came up to Freeman's Creek, March 6, 1863, with 8 preachers in attendance, where J. W. Perry was again made Bishop *protem*, and G. L. Hensley, Secretary. At this session great excitement prevailed in the country on account of the fear that the rebel force encamped within 15 or 20 miles would raid the Conference and carry off the preachers prisoners. In a short time after this Rev. H. Messinger was captured and starved to death in prison.

There were reported to the chart at this session 1720 members, an increase of 125. Preachers' salary footed up for the whole Conference \$621.39 and the two Presiding Elders reported \$108.90. For missions \$19.07; Telescopes 32; 10 Sunday Schools with 298 scholars, with 51 officers and teachers and 26 copies of the Children's Friend. The average salary of the ministers was \$56.49 for 12 months work. Yet in spite of all of this never was there a more resigned and uncomplaining set of men gathered together in one assembly, and at no session in the history of this Conference did the ministers go out more fully consecrated to the work, determined to do or die for the Master. Yes, one brother loved and esteemed by all asked to be left without work on account of failing health and repaired with the aid of friends to Baltimore to seek medical treatment and within a few weeks the sad intelligence shocked the entire Conference that W. M. Long, one of the purest and most promising young men of the Conference had fallen in the arms of death on the 11th of July 1863 at the early age of 28 years, being the first minister of the Conference to receive his transfer to the Glory World, to head the list to which has since been added the names of J. Bachtel, 1866; W. H. Miles, 1868; G. G. Ankrom, 1872; M. Howell, 1872; W. W. Hubbard, 1873; W. Slaughter, 1895; W. H. Diddle, 1877; R. D. Sayre, 1877; H. R. Davis, 1880; E. H. Heater, 1881;

D. Engle, 1883; J. O. Stevens, 1883; Eli Martin, 1884; swelling the list to 14, one to each two years of the Conference's existence.

In 1864 the Conference was held at West Columbia, where Bishop Markwood presided, at which an encouraging growth, both in numbers and finance was shown from the chart, as has been at each session from then until the present time. The Conference sessions have been held as follows: at Long Run, 1865; Otterbein, 1866; Centerville, 1867; at West Columbia, 1868; at Mt. Olive, 1869; at Hartford, 1870; Pennsboro, 1871; Hartford, 1872; Parkersburg, 1873; New Haven, 1874; Buckhannon, 1875; Parkersburg, 1876; Bachtal, 1877; Grafton, 1878; Hartford, 1879; Buckhannon, 1880; Parkersburg, 1881; Grafton, 1882; Bachtal, 1883; Philippi, 1884; Union, 1885; Freeman's Creek, 1885; the short year giving two sessions in one date, 29 in all.

The 30th session will be held at Pennsboro, September 15, 1886. At each one of these sessions a healthy growth has been shown in membership and finances. We have only the data at hand by which we can give you the statistics showing these facts up to 1885. The first year showed that 484 members were received. In 1885, 1224 were received. We find that up to that time 27,223 members had been received. \$299,226.98 had been collected for all purposes; \$16,725.59 had been collected for Sunday School purposes. During these years 1178 have died, the major part of these have left behind the evidence that they had gone to join the Church of the first born, truly was said by one, "Our People die well."

In comparing the progress of the Church we find---

	<u>1858</u>	<u>1862-1863</u>	<u>1885</u>
Members	950	1531	8092
Salary		\$594.40	\$7098.49
App.		96	251
Meeting House	21	23	110-3/4
Members Received	484	212	1224
Sunday School		10	159
Scholars		278	6722
Teachers & Officers		51	1047
Col. for Sunday Schol		\$19.00	\$1161.86
Missions		\$19.07	\$450.55
Total		\$915.02	\$23488.82
Value of Meeting House		\$9000	\$81,869.00
Preachers	12	22	55
Telescopes		32	214
Children Friend		26	2465
MV			2419
Bible Teachers			130
Quarterlies			3231
Parsonages			12
Value			\$5413
Presiding Elders Salary	\$155.00	\$108.50	\$1375.78

In 1859 a Ministerial Association was organized for the mutual improvement of the ministers of the Conference. There were only about 6 ministers who could attend, owing to the wide spread condition of the work and the isolation of the fields from each other. In our Cabinet may be seen a group showing the Association in 1863. Though few in number the meetings were looked forward to by the members with intense interest, from the fact that this was the only source of culture. But advancing our comparison, instead of one small Association of 6 or 7 members we now have three ministerial institutes with from 10 to 15 members in each, and a splendid Academy of learning, the West Virginia Normal and Classical Academy at Buckhannon, W. Va., with a chair directed especially to the culture of ministers in the study of theology. And by the blessing of our free school system our young men have a fine opportunity to enter the study of theology, with a good English education as a base.

In addition to the increase in number of meeting houses, many of the old buildings of limited size have been replaced with new ones of better size and quality. Of the ministry of the Conference there have been 14 died and 28 or 29 transfers. Of the original 11 four have died, three have transferred to other Conferences and four still live in West Virginia -- Z. Warner, J. W. Perry, G. W. Miles and Samuel Martin. The two first brethren have been sketched in this paper, the latter Uncle Sam, as he has always been familiarly known, was originally a member of the Virginia Conference, and was appointed to and accepted Glenville Circuit near Spencer, in Roane County about the year 1855 or 56, under the direction of the Virginia Conference. When the new Conference was formed he cast in his lot with them for a number of years, then transferred to Scioto Conference, but was subsequently returned to Parkersburg Conference and now lives at Milton Station, in Cabell County, W. Va. He has been a man of wonderful physical constitution, but time, and toil, and anxiety have made their inroads upon his giant frame, and the once giant like body is now tottering upon his cane and the grave will ere claim it as its own. But we are glad to know that that grace that has done so much for Uncle Sam in the past, still sustains him in old age and enables him to shout the praises of God in hopes of eternal life. Of the original number, the four who have passed over are Father Bachtel, of whom we have spoken, William James, who for many years resided in Tyler County on his farm and traveled a few fields of labor in the early history of the Conference, but eventually transferred in 1869 to a Western Conference, where he died in a few years but was found at his post. Dr. H. R. Davis was for a few years in the itinerancy, but having removed out of the bounds of the occupied District of the Conference, held a local relation that will be remembered by the Conference for his zeal in the spread of our borders. He died at his home in Lincoln in 1880, April 8, at the advanced age

than any save one of those yet living. Rev. Eli Martin was the youth of the number called away. His name is more familiar throughout the church than either of the others, being known to almost every circuit and to the majority of classes in the Conference. He traveled for a number of years in the early history of the Church, but owing to the loss of his eyes he had to abandon the charge of a circuit, but was for many years recognized as Conference Evangelist. He was a clear theologian and a good preacher, sometimes powerful and a debater that never met his peer on the subjects on which he debated. As a Scriptorian he was unexcelled in the Conference and scarcely equalled in the State. He died November 18, 1884, at Pennsboro, W. Va. at the age of 67. The last of the old vererans who fell asleep on their arms was Rev. D. Engle of Gilmer County. The fact of Father Engle never speaking in public of anything but his mother tongue, the German, prevented his being largely known, but in the sphere in which he moved among the old German Brethren, his services were held to be invaluable and all held him to be a sterling Christian, true to the principles of the Church. He died in 1885. John P. White transferred to some Western Conference and was lost sight of. We have no history of him. L. Hess transferred to Virginia Conference in 1883 and at last account was engaged in the practice of medicine in the Valley of Virginia. J. W. Perry and G. W. Miles and Z. Warner are still members of the Conference but neither are in the active work of the Conference, except that Brother Perry is Conference Evangelist. We have spoken of each of these already.

Before closing this paper I can but say we should be very grateful to God for the degree of prosperity that has attended us during the past half century. But it is to be regretted that there is not as good a showing in Missionary money in the last few years as we have had in the past. For instance 1872 - 4874 members paid \$635.06 for Missions, while in 1885, -- 8092 members only paid \$450.55.

Almost double the membership and only a little over half the amount paid for Missions. To a large degree our success is due to the missionary spirit maintained in the Conference and there are large fertile fields lying ready waiting for us to occupy had we the men and money to take them up. We ought to have a congregation in every town in the state, but it is utterly impossible to occupy them without missionary money.

We have thus imperfectly sketched the Rise and Progress of the Church in West Virginia which shows in 1836, one minister, 20 members; in 1886, 60 ministers, over 9000 members; 1836 one field of labor, in 1886, 39 fields. In 1836 less than \$100 paid for the gospel; in 1886, over \$8000; in 1836 for all purposes less than \$100. In 1886 nearly \$25,000.

With these facts before us the United Brethren Church should thank God and take courage.

Rev. J. L. Hensley, M. D., was born in Rockingham, Virginia, January 24, 1832. Licensed to preach October 18, 1856. He came to West Virginia, April 1859. He was converted October 12, 1844. At this date (1886) he has been a Christian 42 years, in the ministry 30 years next October.

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